United Nations A/55/216

General Assembly

Distr.: General
2 August 2000

Original: English

Fifty-fifth session
Item 74 (l) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament: assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them

Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

This report covers events and activities at the international, regional and subregional levels relating to the provision of assistance to States in their efforts to curb the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them.

Section II of the report outlines actions taken by the United Nations, inter alia, by the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters and through the United Nations Trust Fund for the Consolidation of Peace through Practical Disarmament Measures.

Section III gives a brief account of the requests made by States for United Nations assistance in their efforts to curb the illicit circulation of small arms and collecting such arms and actions taken by the United Nations in response.

Section IV covers the regional and subregional initiatives relating to the subject, including those taken by the Organization of African Unity and the Southern African Development Community and in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. A number of paragraphs are devoted to the establishment of national commissions against the proliferation of small arms.

* A/55/150.
** This report covers events and activities relating to the subject from October 1999 to July 2000.

00-59066 (E) 290800

Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–2	3
II.	Activities within the United Nations	3–6	3
III.	Requests from Member States for United Nations Assistance	7–14	4
IV.	Regional and subregional initiatives	15–22	5

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 54/54 J of 1 December 1999, entitled "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them", the General Assembly encouraged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts, in the context of the implementation of resolution 49/75 G of 15 December 1994 and of the recommendations of the United Nations advisory missions, to curb the illicit circulation and proliferation of small arms and to collect such arms in the affected States that so request, with the support of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and in close cooperation with the Organization of African Unity. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to continue to examine the question and to submit a report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to the above-mentioned request. It takes into account a number of initiatives taken at the national, subregional, regional and international levels to address the issue of the illicit circulation and proliferation of small arms and light weapons, focusing on the aspect of providing assistance to States.

II. Activities within the United Nations

A. Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

3. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/54 V, entitled "Small arms", the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was held in New York from 28 February to 3 March 2000. During the session, a large number of delegations stressed the need for and the importance of strengthening international, regional and subregional cooperation in international efforts to combat, control and eliminate the illicit circulation and proliferation of small arms and light weapons. They also called on the international community to provide more assistance to the countries and regions most affected by the illicit circulation and excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons, including their efforts to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants, collecting and destroying arms in post-conflict situations.

B. Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

4. At its session held from 31 January to 2 February 2000, the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters considered again the question of small arms in general. The discussion pointed to a triple-track approach to the United Nations Conference on small arms. The first track could be global consciousness-raising; the second track would involve the creation of international norms; the third track, and by far the most important, would involve the efforts, initiatives and activities of regions and subregions to address the issue. It was pointed out that sustained efforts were necessary, since the effects of small arms proliferation could last a long time after a conflict ended. The international community was called upon to play a pivotal role in supporting countries and regions in those efforts, both politically and financially.

C. United Nations Trust Fund for the Consolidation of Peace through Practical Disarmament Measures

5. The United Nations Trust Fund for the Consolidation of Peace through Practical Disarmament Measures was established by the Secretary-General in August 1998, on the recommendation of the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures.[1] The Trust Fund is administered by the Department for Disarmament Affairs, United Nations Secretariat. Among the objectives of the Fund are to assist countries affected by the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons in their efforts to consolidate peace through practical disarmament measures, including retrieval, storage and safeguarding of weapons from demobilized personnel and for the destruction of those weapons; to promote the exchange of national and subregional experiences in the collection, control and disposal of arms, especially small arms and light weapons, and the reintegration of former combatants into civil society after the end of armed conflicts; and to enhance harmonization of national legislation and information exchange among

States to monitor transboundary trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

6. Since the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Department for Disarmament Affairs has been working closely with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and with members of the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures, seeking to use the Trust Fund to provide support for projects and programmes on practical disarmament and related development issues, including support for programmes of weapons collection and destruction. Members of the Group of Interested States have made further financial contributions to the Trust Fund, earmarked for a number of projects in countries such as Albania, Congo and Niger.

III. Requests from Member States for United Nations Assistance

7. A number of prevention and reduction measures aimed at curbing the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and transfer of small arms were set forth in the 1997 report of the Secretary-General on small arms (A/52/298). In resolution 54/54 J, the General Assembly encouraged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to assist States in curbing the illicit circulation of small arms and to collect such arms in the affected States that so request. The information set out below is relevant to those efforts.

A. Albania

8. The Gramsh pilot project known as "Weapons in exchange for development" has concluded successfully. The Government of Albania, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, UNDP and the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures worked closely to ensure the success of the project. As a result of it, about 6,000 weapons and over 100 tons of munitions were collected in one district. More importantly, the project has begun to change the local population's attitude towards weapons and has contributed to a marked improvement in the safety and security situation and in the relationship between the population and the police. As part of the project, development incentives and activities, such as repairing local roads, building bridges, setting up radio telephone systems and rehabilitating electricity facilities have also benefited the community.

9. The Government of Albania has requested the Department for Disarmament Affairs and UNDP to expand the project into other areas of the country. Members of the Group of Interested States and other donors have agreed to provide financial support to the expansion of the pilot project to the districts of Elbasan and Dibra. In April 2000, the Department dispatched an evaluation mission to Albania to assess the result of the pilot project — in particular, the disarmament aspect, to date — and the circumstances in which the project was to be expanded to the districts of Elbasan and Dibra and the expected outcomes.

B. Congo

10. On 18 March 2000, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Congo addressed a letter to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, requesting the assistance of the United Nations in consolidating the cessation of hostilities in the country. In particular, the letter requested the Department for Disarmament Affairs to dispatch a fact-finding mission to the Congo to evaluate the prospect for a possible project on reintegration of former combatants and the collection of small arms.

11. The Department, in close consultation with the Department of Political Affairs, agreed to send a joint information-gathering mission to the Congo from 26 to 28 July 2000. The objective was to assess the current situation in the country regarding the evolution of the political process and its needs in the area of collection and disposal of small arms and light weapons and the reintegration of former combatants.

C. Guinea-Bissau

12. After the successful completion of the electoral process and following consultations with the new Government of Guinea-Bissau, the Secretary-General proposed and the Security Council approved the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) for one year after its previous mandate expired on 31 March 2000. The new mandate, among other things, is to seek the commitment of the Government and other parties to adopt a programme of voluntary arms

collection, disposal and destruction. To that end, UNOGBIS, working closely with the Government of Guinea-Bissau, the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) and the Department for Disarmament Affairs, developed a project entitled "Collection of illegal arms from the civilian population". The project is currently under active consideration by relevant United Nations agencies and departments.

D. Niger

13. In August 1999, the Government of Niger submitted an initial project proposal for the collection of small arms in the country. The Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures met and considered the proposed project and agreed to support it in principle. The Group accordingly requested the Department for Disarmament Affairs to dispatch a fact-finding mission to Niger. The objective of the mission, scheduled for 30 July to 12 August, was to make a preliminary evaluation of the situation in the country and assist the Government in developing a possible programme of retrieving and collecting weapons. The terms of reference for the mission included evaluation of the adequacy of a proposed pilot project and exploration of undertaking a weapons collection and disposal programme suited to the needs of the country. The mission also examined the needs and the functioning of the National Commission for the Collection and Control of Illicit Arms.

E. Sierra Leone

14. After the joint mission of PCASED and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) from 9 March to 2 April 2000, a technical commission was put in place, charged with responsibility for the destruction of small arms and light weapons already collected in the framework of the process of disarmament and demilitarization, as foreseen in the Lomé Peace Agreement. The Government of Sierra Leone had affirmed its determination to destroy the collected weapons, targeting the end of April 2000 for the beginning of the progressive destruction. Unfortunately, the recent outbreak of hostility in the country put on hold this disarmament initiative.

IV. Regional and subregional initiatives

A. Organization of African Unity

15. Pursuant to the decision adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government meeting at its thirty-fifth ordinary session in Algiers, Algeria, on the issue of illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking in small arms and light weapons, the general secretariat of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) convened the first Continental Meeting of African Experts on Small Arms and Light Weapons in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 17 to 19 May 2000. The meeting was part of the preparations for the OAU Ministerial Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons, to be held in Bamako, Mali, from 30 October to 3 November 2000. The meeting reiterated the urgency and the need for inter-African cooperation in addressing the problems associated with the illicit use, transfer and manufacture of small arms and light weapons and called for further cooperation at the international, regional and national levels. The OAU general secretariat, with the support and collaboration of the Institute for Security Studies (based in South Africa) and the cooperation of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, also convened an International Consultation on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 22 to 23 June 2000. The Consultation came up with a number of recommendations, including urging OAU to develop a coordination mechanism to assist Member States, international organizations, regional organizations and civil society to work together for the common goal of controlling and reducing the illicit proliferation and circulation of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

B. Southern African Development Community

16. Member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are in the process of negotiating a protocol on the control of firearms,

ammunition and other related materials in the SADC region. This action is a manifestation of the SADC member States' determination to enhance cooperation and mutual assistance at the regional level, with the objective of effectively combating and eliminating the problem of small arms and light weapons.

C. Nairobi Declaration

17. In March 2000, the Foreign Ministers of all 10 countries of the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa (Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania) met in Nairobi and issued the Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa. The 10 countries expressed their resolution to coordinate efforts in tackling the challenges posed by the excessive accumulation and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the subregion and outlined specific measures to that end. The Nairobi Declaration calls for effective implementation of the relevant decisions of the United Nations and OAU and other regional arrangements that address the problem of illicit small arms and light weapons in the subregion and appeals for increased international support for programmes and initiatives that advance human security and promote conditions conducive to long-term peace, stability and development in the subregion.

D. National commissions against the proliferation of small arms

18. By its resolutions 53/77 B and 54/54 J, the General Assembly "encourages the setting up in the countries of the Saharo-Sahelian subregion of national commissions against the proliferation of small arms, and invites the international community to support as far as possible the smooth functioning of the national commissions where they have been set up".

19. To date, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali and Niger have established national commissions. Other countries in the subregion are in the process of taking the necessary steps to set up national commissions.

20. In order to promote the establishment of national commissions against the proliferation of small arms, PCASED prepared the terms of reference for those bodies and forwarded them to all the Governments of ECOWAS. The ECOWAS Council of Ministers, held in Lomé in December 1999, adopted a decision urging Governments of the subregion to accelerate their efforts in establishing national commissions.

21. Since January 2000, PCASED and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, have dispatched missions to Gambia, Ghana, Liberia and Mali to help facilitate and consolidate the establishment of national commissions. PCASED staff also visited Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Sierra Leone to facilitate the establishment of national commissions. As part of the missions' agenda, PCASED and the Department devoted time to developing a strategy for local and international resource mobilization. This is to help build up the capacity of national commissions to fund their activities and enable them to be self-reliant. A database of local and international donors interested in disarmament issues was also compiled to facilitate the resource mobilization aspect of national commissions.

22. PCASED, in cooperation with the Department, has prepared draft guidelines for the establishment of national commissions. The draft was reviewed during the PCASED evaluation meeting in Bamako in early May 2000, and it is being finalized for publication and circulation among countries in the region.

Notes

[1] The open-ended Group of Interested States on Practical Disarmament Measures was established in March 1998, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 51/38 G of 9 December 1997, entitled "Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures".

United Nations A/55/217

General Assembly

Distr.: General
2 August 2000

Original: English

Fifty-fifth session
Item 74 (i) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament

Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda

Report of the Secretary-General**

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–2	2
II.	Observations by the Secretary-General	3–6	4
III.	Observations by international organizations and Governments	7–10	5
	A. International Atomic Energy Agency	7	5
	B. South Pacific Forum	8	7
	C. Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization	9	7
	D. Government of Thailand	10	8

* A/55/150.

** The preparation of this report was dependent on contributions from international organizations and a Government.

00-59041 (E) 300800

I. Introduction

1. On 1 December 1999, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/54 G, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", paragraphs 1 to 21 of which read as follows:

"*The General Assembly*,

"...

"1. *Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States to make an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the speedy and total elimination of their nuclear arsenals and to engage without delay in an accelerated process of negotiations, thus achieving nuclear disarmament, to which they are committed under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

"2. *Calls upon* the United States of America and the Russian Federation to bring the Treaty on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START II) into force without further delay and to commence negotiations on START III with a view to its early conclusion;

"3. *Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States to undertake the necessary steps towards the seamless integration of all five nuclear-weapon States into the process leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons;

"4. *Calls* for the examination of ways and means to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security policies so as to enhance strategic stability, facilitate the process of the elimination of these weapons and contribute to international confidence and security;

"5. *Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States, in this context, to take early steps:

(a) To reduce tactical nuclear weapons with a view to their elimination as an integral part of nuclear arms reductions;

(b) To examine the possibilities for and to proceed to the de-alerting and removal of nuclear warheads from delivery vehicles;

(c) To examine nuclear weapons policies and postures further;

(d) To demonstrate transparency with regard to their nuclear arsenals and fissile material inventories;

(e) To place all fissile material for nuclear weapons declared to be in excess of military requirements under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards in the framework of the voluntary safeguards agreements in place;

"6. *Calls upon* those three States that are nuclear weapons capable and that have not yet acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to reverse clearly and urgently the pursuit of all nuclear weapons development or deployment and to refrain from any action that could undermine regional and international peace and security and the efforts of the international community towards nuclear disarmament and the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons;

"7. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to adhere unconditionally and without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to take all the necessary measures which flow from adherence to that instrument as non-nuclear-weapon States;

"8. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to conclude full-scope safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency and to conclude additional protocols to their safeguards agreements on the basis of the Model Protocol approved by the Board of Governors of the Agency on 15 May 1997;

"9. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify, unconditionally and without delay, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and, pending the entry into force of the Treaty, to observe a moratorium on nuclear tests;

"10. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to adhere to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and to work towards its further strengthening;

"11. *Urges* the development of the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency, and urges

that similar arrangements be developed by the other nuclear-weapon States;

"12. *Calls upon* the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee under item 1 of its agenda entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator and the mandate contained therein, of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, taking into consideration both nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament objectives, and to pursue and conclude these negotiations without delay, and, pending the entry into force of the treaty, urges all States to observe a moratorium on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices;

"13. *Also calls upon* the Conference on Disarmament to establish an appropriate subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament and, to that end, to pursue as a matter of priority its intensive consultations on appropriate methods and approaches with a view to reaching such a decision without delay;

"14. *Considers* that an international conference on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, which would effectively complement efforts being undertaken in other settings, could facilitate the consolidation of a new agenda for a nuclear-weapon-free world;

"15. *Notes*, in this context, that the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000 will consider peace, security and disarmament;

"16. *Stresses* the importance of the full implementation of the decisions and the resolution adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and, in this connection, underlines the significance of the forthcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in April/May 2000;

"17. *Affirms* that the development of verification arrangements will be necessary for the maintenance of a world free from nuclear weapons, and requests the International Atomic Energy Agency, together with any other relevant international organizations and bodies, to continue to explore the elements of such a system;

"18. *Calls* for the conclusion of an internationally legally binding instrument to effectively assure non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;

"19. *Stresses* that the pursuit, extension and establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at, especially in regions of tension, such as the Middle East and South Asia, represent a significant contribution to the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world;

"20. *Affirms* that a nuclear-weapon-free world will ultimately require the underpinnings of a universal and multilaterally negotiated legally binding instrument or a framework encompassing a mutually reinforcing set of instruments;

"21. *Requests* the Secretary-General, within existing resources, to compile a report on the implementation of the present resolution."

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 21 of resolution 54/54 G. In connection with paragraph 17 of the resolution, the Secretary-General sought the cooperation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), the Organization of African Unity regarding the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) (A/50/426, annex), the South Pacific Forum regarding the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga), the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) and the Government of Thailand in its capacity as depositary of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty), taking into account their respective experiences, in exploring the possible elements for developing verification arrangements as envisaged in resolution 54/54 G. The

views received from the various international organizations and a Government are reflected as received, in section III below. Any additional contributions will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Observations by the Secretary-General

3. The Secretary-General notes that despite the achievements in bilateral and unilateral nuclear weapons reduction, the international community remains deeply concerned at the continued risk for humanity represented by the possibility that these nuclear weapons could be used. In this context, he recalls his report to the Millennium Assembly of the United Nations, entitled "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century", in which he stressed the need for reaffirmation of political commitment at the highest levels to reducing the dangers arising both from existing nuclear weapons and from further proliferation (A/54/2000, para. 252).

4. The Secretary-General notes with satisfaction the successful outcome of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. He believes that the adoption of the Final Document by consensus at the Review Conference marks a significant step forward in humanity's pursuit of a world free of nuclear danger. He notes that the consensus agreement by the Conference extends to new efforts aimed at the total elimination of nuclear weapons and non-proliferation and the strengthening of essential standards governing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

5. The Secretary-General welcomes the practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons which were approved by the 2000 Review Conference and strongly hopes for their earliest implementation at all levels. The steps agreed upon are as follows:[1]

> "1. The importance and urgency of signatures and ratifications, without delay and without conditions and in accordance with constitutional processes, to achieve the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.
>
> "2. A moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosions pending entry into force of that Treaty.
>
> "3. The necessity of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with the statement of the Special Coordinator in 1995 and the mandate contained therein, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on such a treaty with a view to their conclusion within five years.
>
> "4. The necessity of establishing in the Conference on Disarmament an appropriate subsidiary body with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate establishment of such a body.
>
> "5. The principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures.
>
> "6. An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all States parties are committed under article VI.
>
> "7. The early entry into force and full implementation of START II and the conclusion of START III as soon as possible while preserving and strengthening the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems as a cornerstone of strategic stability and as a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons, in accordance with its provisions.
>
> "8. The completion and implementation of the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency.
>
> "9. Steps by all the nuclear-weapon States leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that

promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all:

- Further efforts by the nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally;
- Increased transparency by the nuclear-weapon States with regard to the nuclear weapons capabilities and the implementation of agreements pursuant to article VI and as a voluntary confidence-building measure to support further progress on nuclear disarmament;
- The further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process;
- Concrete agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems;
- A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimize the risk that these weapons will ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination;
- The engagement as soon as appropriate of all the nuclear-weapon States in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons.

"10. Arrangements by all nuclear-weapon States to place, as soon as practicable, fissile material designated by each of them as no longer required for military purposes under IAEA or other relevant international verification and arrangements for the disposition of such material for peaceful purposes, to ensure that such material remains permanently outside military programmes.

"11. Reaffirmation that the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in the disarmament process is general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

"12. Regular reports, within the framework of the strengthened review process for the Non-Proliferation Treaty, by all States parties on the implementation of article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament", and recalling the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996.

"13. The further development of the verification capabilities that will be required to provide assurance of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear-weapon-free world."

6. The Secretary-General also notes the deliberations and the proposals put forward on paragraphs 12, 13 and 18 of resolution 54/54 G by delegations in the Conference on Disarmament.

III. Observations by international organizations and Governments

A. International Atomic Energy Agency

7. In its comments, IAEA stated as follows:

"The resolution reiterates and reinforces the views expressed by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session in its resolution 53/77 Y of 4 December 1998. It recognizes that the achievement of a world free from nuclear weapons will require a concurrent, dual-track approach in order to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons and to eliminate existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons. To attain the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world, the resolution focuses on a comprehensive, all-inclusive programme designed to encompass all pertinent elements of nuclear disarmament and of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, including existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms and arrangements.

"At the same time, it recognizes the validity of a step-by-step approach to the pursuit of a nuclear-weapon-free world. It will be recalled that such an approach, involving both nuclear non-proliferation and arms control and disarmament efforts, was endorsed by the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is reflected, inter alia, in the practical steps envisaged in paragraph 15 of the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference[2] as relevant to the implementation of article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Paragraph 15 of the Final Document will be crucial to the achievement of the aims of resolution 54/54 G.

"The resolution, like its predecessor, affirms that the development of verification arrangements will be necessary for the maintenance of a world free from nuclear weapons. In such a world, it is clear that States will require a particularly high level of assurance that the pertinent verification arrangements which need to be in place will promptly detect any cheating on the part of other States. Effective verification will accordingly be a sine qua non of the various legal obligations and undertakings which resolution 54/54 G highlights as essential to a nuclear-weapon-free world. In this regard, we consider that the long experience of IAEA in implementing safeguards, a fundamental pillar of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, will be of pivotal importance.

"The significance of IAEA safeguards to nuclear non-proliferation, and to an environment conducive to nuclear disarmament and to nuclear cooperation, is widely recognized. With a safeguards system which has now been strengthened considerably in the wake of our experience in Iraq, IAEA is in a position to provide enhanced assurance that States are abiding by their nuclear non-proliferation commitments, thereby further fostering confidence between States and thus enhancing international security. The strengthened safeguards system sets new standards of transparency and openness and provides the Agency with powerful new tools to verify compliance with nuclear non-proliferation commitments. Key to our ability to be able to use these tools to maximum effect is that *all* States accept comprehensive safeguards, and that they subscribe also to the enhanced verification measures contained in the Model Protocol Additional to safeguards agreements.[3] Paragraph 8 of resolution 54/54 G acknowledges this. Universal adherence to 'comprehensive' safeguards agreements modelled on INFCIRC/153 (Corr.) and protocols additional to such agreements would enable the Agency to make a major contribution to global verification of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

"It should be recalled that IAEA is currently taking an active part in other contexts which could be relevant for the eventual verification of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Paragraphs 5 (e) and 11 of resolution 54/54 G refer, for example, to initiatives with some of the nuclear-weapon States to verify that nuclear material declared as excess to their military requirements remains irreversibly removed from nuclear weapons programmes. In 1996, the Agency began work with the Russian Federation and the United States to establish a prototype verification system for weapon-origin and other fissile material specified by those States as released from military programmes. The amounts of material to be verified could ultimately total hundreds of tonnes of highly enriched uranium and plutonium. Such a system must provide assurance that the material remains removed from nuclear weapons programmes.

"Paragraph 12 of the resolution refers to the preliminary discussions under way in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on the issue of a treaty prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The verification arrangements for such a treaty have yet to be determined, but the Agency is on record as being ready to provide any assistance deemed necessary by the Conference on Disarmament, as consistent with the mandate of the Agency and with the pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly, which requested the Agency 'to provide assistance for examination of verification arrangements for such a treaty as required'.[4] The verification regime of a fissile material cut-off treaty will probably focus, in particular, on nuclear material and facilities in nuclear-weapon States and States non-parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty not currently subject to IAEA safeguards. This will present new verification challenges, particularly in facilities where independent, outside inspection was never anticipated.

"The Agency also continues to provide assistance and guidance to the executive bodies of and States parties to the various nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties in existence or under negotiation.

"It plays a crucial role, as well, in efforts to strengthen the international physical protection regime for nuclear material and facilities referred

to in paragraph 10 of resolution 54/54 G. Increasing awareness of the need to protect nuclear material and other radioactive sources from unlawful activities has led the international community to consider strengthening the physical protection regime. The Agency has reinforced its ongoing work in this regard to assist States in their efforts to prevent the unauthorized removal and sabotage of nuclear material and facilities and to detect and respond to incidents of trafficking. In addition, with a view to strengthening and making the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material more effective, the Director-General is currently seeking the advice of States parties to the Convention on whether there is a need for its revision.

"At the same time, as pointed out in my comments on aspects of General Assembly resolution 53/77 Y of 4 December 1998 on the same subject (see A/54/372, para. 9), many of the issues associated with the elimination of nuclear weapons go far beyond the realm of verification and will require political, economic and security accommodations.

"Thus, while IAEA will continue to be ready to undertake verification tasks consistent with its mandate, as requested, which would contribute to a nuclear-weapon-free world, it is essentially for States themselves to undertake and accomplish most of the necessary groundwork in this regard."

B. South Pacific Forum

8. The reply from the South Pacific Forum Secretariat, in its capacity as depositary of the Treaty of Rarotonga, reads as follows:

"As we advised last year in similar correspondence relating to paragraph 16 of resolution 53/77 Y (ibid., para. 12), articles 8, 9 and 10 of the Rarotonga Treaty provide for the verification arrangements of the Treaty which consist of reports and exchange of information, consultations, the application to peaceful nuclear activities of safeguards by IAEA and a complaints procedure.

"The procedures under the verification arrangements of the Treaty have not been invoked by any party to the Treaty or Protocols to the Treaty thus far. France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America have conducted nuclear tests in the region, but that was prior to the Treaty coming into effect or France becoming a party to the Protocols to the Treaty.

"The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization is also in the process of negotiating the establishment of monitoring sites in our region with several of our members as part of the International Monitoring System provided for under that Treaty. At their most recent meeting in Palau, in October 1999, Forum Leaders encouraged Forum members who had been chosen to host monitoring stations under the International Monitoring System of the global verification regime provided for under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to expedite the completion of national arrangements required for setting up the stations as soon as practicable.

"With our limited experience, our view would be that a global verification regime should consist of both technical verification systems and consultative mechanisms. The latter is particularly relevant in our region."

C. Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

9. The Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for CTBTO submitted the following reply:

"The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization was established by the States signatories to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty on 19 November 1996 for the purpose of carrying out the necessary preparations for the effective implementation of the Treaty.

"To date, 155 States have signed the Treaty and 57 States have ratified it. Of the 44 States whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty to enter into force, 28 have deposited their instruments of ratification, while 3 have yet to sign the Treaty. In a major call by the international community to advance entry into force, the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (Vienna, 6-8 October 1999), which was held in accordance with article XIV of the Treaty, adopted a Final Declaration by consensus. The Declaration, inter alia, called upon States to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible and to refrain from acts that would defeat its object and purpose in the meanwhile. This call was taken up in the Final Document adopted by consensus on 19 May 2000 at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

"Pursuant to legal arrangements that, as at the end of June 2000, the Commission had concluded with 64 States covering 274 monitoring facilities, work to establish or upgrade the 337 facilities of the International Monitoring System is well under way. Rigorous site surveys are being conducted to assess the suitability of prospective station locations and the equipment or construction work needed so that stations may meet the stringent requirements of the verification regime of the Treaty. Certification has been initiated for a number of stations of the network. Training is conducted for prospective station managers and operators.

"The International Data Centre is being progressively commissioned in Vienna as the nerve centre of the verification system for the Treaty. Over 100 monitoring stations are now contributing data to the Centre. Concurrently, a secure satellite-based global communications infrastructure is being progressively installed. In February 2000, the Centre began providing initial services and distributing raw data from the International Monitoring System and standard products of the Centre to States signatories. The Centre conducts training programmes for its prospective analysts and for staff of national data centres.

"While on-site inspections can only be mandated after the Treaty enters into force, the Preparatory Commission is developing and putting in place the framework for inspections according to Treaty requirements. This involves, first and foremost, compiling a first draft of the operational manual, as well as a concept of operations, designating and procuring some inspection equipment, and conducting on-site inspection training and exercise programmes to form a cadre of potential inspectors.

"Quality assurance work, to ensure that the verification regime meets the high expectations of the international community, is proceeding through the design and implementation of a framework that includes the definition of metrics and tools for evaluation.

"The Commission has also instituted an international cooperation programme to enhance understanding of the significance of the Treaty regime and the potential thereunder for other peaceful purposes.

"With the entry into force on 15 June 2000 of the Agreement to Regulate the Relationship between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission,[5] the Commission and the United Nations will be in a position to cooperate closely on matters of common concern, thus facilitating the implementation of their respective mandates. Discussions on a related agreement with the United Nations Development Programme are under way."

D. Government of Thailand

10. The Government of Thailand, as depositary of the Bangkok Treaty, reported that it has no additional views other than those enunciated in its earlier comments regarding resolution 53/77 Y (see A/54/372, para. 11).

Notes

[1] NPT/CONF.2000/28 (Parts I and II), pp. 14-15.

[2] Ibid.

[3] INFCIRC/540 (Corr.).

[4] General Assembly resolution 48/75 L, para. 2.

[5] A/54/884, annex.